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INFORMATION

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COUNTRY China/USSR

DATE DISTR. 7 September 1948

SUBJECT Political Information: Soviet Passports,

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Sojourn Certificates, and other documents hereby referred to

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This document is hereby referred to
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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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1. Russians in China may generally be divided into the following three groups:
 - a. Russian subjects who came to China before 1917 for business or other reasons.
 - b. Russian subjects who came to China as refugees from the Civil War in Russia.
 - c. Soviet subjects who came to China either as bona fide travelers or escapees from the USSR. Some of this group later renounced their USSR citizenship and registered with the Chinese authorities as Russian stateless emigres.
2. The majority of all Russians in China who were former Tsarist subjects renounced their citizenship and registered with the Chinese authorities as Russian refugees. They were given regular Chinese Residence Certificates marked "Stateless Russian." Those in possession of Soviet travel documents (group c above) were also issued Chinese Residence Certificates, but these certificates were marked "Soviet Citizen." Some of these persons with Soviet papers succeeded in getting so-called regular Soviet travel passports; the majority of them, however, were given so-called Sojourn Certificates (Vid na Zhitelstvo), which had to be renewed every year by the Soviet Consulate in the event the bearer desired to return to the USSR.
3. During the Japanese occupation of China in World War II, some Russian stateless refugees applied for and received Soviet citizenship. Most of them were seeking Soviet protection against possible Japanese or Chinese interference.
4. A rush to change from stateless status to USSR citizenship started in June 1947 when the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR granted all former Tsarist subjects the privilege of applying for Soviet citizenship and returning to the USSR. The majority of Russian stateless refugees in China, especially those of the poorer classes, applied for Soviet citizenship and were later repatriated.
5. After a careful, satisfactory check of such application by the local Soviet Consulate, and probably a check in Moscow, "Receipt Citizens" are called to the Soviet Consulate, where they are issued a so-called Sojourn Certificate. The Chinese and other foreign authorities in China have accepted these certificates as regular passports; they are not, however, because on the last page of the Sojourn Certificate there is a space marked only in the Russian language which reads "_____ entry visa to the USSR and border control points." The fact

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that the space is left blank indicates that the visa has not been numbered or otherwise certified and that holders of these Sojourn Certificates must secure regular USSR visas before entering the USSR.

6. From conversations with Soviet repatriates who left China in 1947 it was learned that these Sojourn Certificate were to be surrendered to the USSR authorities in China before getting regular travel documents. (These travel documents have not been seen by American observers of this office.) Repatriates were also told to make certain that their Soviet Citizen Association Membership Cards were up to date before leaving China because these cards would serve them as temporary internal passports in the USSR until such time as regular internal papers would be issued.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Comment. It is believed that in addition to the Sojourn Certificates regular USSR passports have been issued to some "Receipt Citizens", especially those known to be engaged in business and other pro-Soviet activities. The extent of the issuance of these passports is not known. It is believed that such persons as M. F. Yakshamin of TASS and L. Tomashevsky of Asia Films hold regular Soviet passports, although these men did not come from the USSR to China as Soviet citizens.)

7. Russians in Shanghai have learned from letters sent from the USSR by repatriates from China that in spite of the assurances given repatriates by local Soviet consulates, those who were repatriated were not considered full-fledged Soviet citizens and were put on probation for periods of from one to three years.

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